

HENRY SCHNETBERG.

JANUARY 11, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HALTERMAN, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 1541.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 1541) granting an increase of pension to Henry Schnetberg, have considered the same and recommend that it do pass, amended, however, by changing the title so as to read, "A bill granting an increase of pension to Henry Schnetberg," and by adding after the last word the words "the same to be in lieu of the pension now drawn by him."

A similar bill was favorably reported to the House by your committee in the Fifty-third Congress, but owing to lack of time it was not taken up for action. The report accompanying that bill (No. 1404, Fifty-third Congress), fully setting forth the facts, is adopted by your committee as their report.

[House Report No. 1404, Fifty-third Congress, second session.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 7129) granting a pension to Henry Schnetberg, have had the same under consideration and respectfully report as follows:

Mr. Schnetberg served from December 21, 1846, to July 14, 1848, in Company B, Second Pennsylvania Volunteers, Mexican war, and during that period participated in many of the battles of the war. Subsequently, and notwithstanding the fact that he was nearly sixty years of age, he enlisted in the Union Army and rendered considerable service during the war of the rebellion.

In 1875 the claimant filed an application at the Pension Office alleging that while in Mexico he contracted rheumatism, and a medical examination, ordered in connection with the claim, showed that he was totally disabled by the disease.

He was unable to furnish the proof required by the Pension Bureau, however, and the claim was disallowed.

On July 5, 1884, a special act of Congress was passed granting him a pension of \$8 per month, and he is now in receipt of that amount. When the act of January 5, 1893, was passed allowing a pension of \$12 per month to pensioners of the Mexican war who are wholly disabled for manual labor and in destitute circumstances, Mr. Schnetberg made application thereunder, but his claim was rejected on the ground that he was pensioned by special act, and was not, therefore, entitled to the increase provided for those who were pensioned for service under the general law.

A petition signed by 117 citizens of Indiana County, Pa., urging Congress to pass the bill for claimant's relief is on file with the papers, and in addition to this the necessity for such action is fully set forth in the following letter from Hon. H. K. Sloan, a distinguished citizen of Pennsylvania:

"INDIANA, PA., March 29, 189—.

"MY DEAR SIR: I have the honor to hand you petition of representative citizens of this community—the judge of our court, our clergy, lawyers, physicians, merchants, and laboring men—praying for the passage of a special act of Congress to pay Capt.

Henry Schnetberg the pension granted by act of Congress to Mexican veterans for the period which elapsed between the day he became 62 years of age and the date upon which said act of Congress became a law, a period of nineteen years ten months and nineteen days. The captain is now a man of almost 92 years of age, nearly blind, almost totally deaf, and physically helpless. He and his old wife have been living on the pittance of \$8 a month granted by the act of Congress above mentioned. I believe this act was afterwards amended and the pension increased, but it seems Commissioner of Pensions Raum made some sort of rule whereby the Mexican veterans are obliged to establish as a fact that they were paupers before they could receive the benefit of the increased pension.

"The petition would have been signed by every man, woman, and child in this community had the opportunity been given them so to do. I scarcely know what you can do in the matter, but if this relief is given it will do nothing more than a mere act of justice to one of the grandest patriots that lives anywhere for the services he rendered, not only in the Mexican, but also during the war of the rebellion. This would enable the old man and his old wife to spend their few remaining days of life in some degree of comfort, and in a measure be a fitting return for the services he so gladly and freely gave to his adopted country in the past.

"I earnestly hope, therefore, that you may find some way in which to afford this old man some relief. I have written Mr. Kribbs, Member from the Twenty-eighth district, and trust he may aid you in whatever manner he can.

"Yours, very respectfully,

"H. K. SLOAN.

"Hon. DANIEL B. HEINER,
"Washington, D. C."

In view of the foregoing facts and circumstances your committee return the bill with a favorable recommendation.